A BRIEF NARRATIVE OF THE STATE OF THE PROTESTANTS IN HUNGARY; AND The Sufferings and Perſecutions of the Miniſters of Chriſt for Religion in that KINGDOM.

With Allowance.

LONDON,
Printed for *T. Parkhurſt* at the Bible and three Crowns in *Cheap-ſide*, and *N. Simmons* at the Princes Arms in S. *Paul's* Church-Yard. 1677.

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A brief Narrative of the ſtate of the Proteſtants in Hungary, *&c.*

IT may juſtly be wondered, how ſo great a change in matters of Religion ſhould befall the Kingdom of *Hungary*, where the Proteſtant Religion was not only ſo well ſetled in the year 1567. but alſo generally profeſt by the People (there having been ſcarce one in ten, before the late Perſecution, of the Romiſh Religion) even in all the great Towns (one or two only excepted) ſo that there were at leaſt 2500 Proteſtant Churches in that Kingdom; and the free exerciſe thereof eſtabliſht by the Laws of the Land, and their Kings ſworn in their Coronation Oaths to maintain and preſerve the ſame. For the ſatisfaction therefore of thoſe that deſire it, is the preſent *Narrative* ſent abroad, with a faithful Report of matter of fact, without any reflections upon any, further than they have concerned themſelves, in acting a part in this doleful Tragedy.

When the Prelates and Jeſuits of that Nation ſaw no way, in many years, of overturning the Proteſtant Religion there, but by perſecution: they ſtill ſought pretexts, to ingage their King, the Emperour of *Germany*, to perſecute the Profeſſors, and eſpecially the Miniſters thereof. In the year therefore 1670. when a Rebellion brake out; though the Heads thereof were known and profeſt Papiſts, (ſuch as *Zereny* Prince of *Croatia*, Earl *Nadaſdi* Judge of the *Hungarian* Court, Earl *Trangepan*, Prince *Rakoczy* (Son to him of *Tranſilvania*, and *Zereny's* ſon in law) and the two *Barkoczys* (who ſince, having made their peace with the Emperour, became great Perſecutors of the Proteſtants) with divers others, Noblemen and Gentlemen; and the Conteſts meerly about Civil Matters, and nothing relating to Religion: yet the Popiſh Clergy indeavoured to aſperſe the Proteſtants as guilty thereof, or to be at leaſt Complices therein. And judging it a fit time now to put their deſigns in practiſe, when the Emperour had, upon the occaſion of the Rebellion, Garriſon'd all the ſtrong places of the Nation with *German* Souldiers; they began to accuſe, firſt ſome of the Nobles and beſt quality, that were the greateſt Patrons of the Proteſtants, as guilty of Rebellion, impriſoning the Perſons of ſuch as would not fly, or could not eſcape them, and confiſcating their Eſtates; and afterwards the generality of the Gentry and Citizens that were Principal Members of the Proteſtant Churches, under the command of the Emperor. The reſt ſeeing their innocent Neighbours, and even ſuch as never medled with Publick Affairs, ſo dealt withal, were ſo affrighted, that they choſe rather to ſave themſelves by flight, than yield themſelves to the fury of the Perſecutors.

The Principal Proteſtants being thus removed by impriſonment and flight, the perſecuting Clergy then fell upon the Miniſters; arreſting ſome of the chief,

and violently taking, in ſeveral places, where thought beſt, the Churches and Schools into their hands: till at length making no difference betwixt the pretended Rebels and others, their deſign plainly appeared to be the rooting out of the Proteſtant Religion, and the Profeſſors thereof. Which ſo increaſed the numbers of thoſe that fled, and thoſe that complained of their Confiſcations and Perſecutions, that frequent Tumults aroſe and great Confuſion throughout the Kingdom. Inſomuch that by the inſolent carriage, great outrages, and exactions of the *German* Souldiers, on the one hand; and the continual and violent Perſecution from the Popiſh Clergy on the other; the People were ſo inraged, and the number of the perſecuted and oppreſſed ſo great, that not only the Tumults increaſed, but at length they reſolved to take up Arms, to aſſert their lawful Liberties, the year after the *German* Army came into the Kingdom; It being contrary to the Laws of the Land, that any forreign Army ſhould be brought in, or kept there.

As therefore it's evident, that the Rebellion, which was both begun and carried on by the Papiſts, could be no juſt cauſe for perſecuting the Proteſtants: ſo is it well known, that though the Peoples ſufferings were ſo great, and the Laws of the Land ſo manifeſtly violated by a forreign Army, as occaſion'd the after Tumults and taking up Arms; yet that the tenth part of the Proteſtants of the Kingdom neither conſented thereto, nor joined with them at firſt, but on the contrary oppoſed them, as in particular thoſe of *Phileky*, whereof 50 were ſlain.

The Kingdom being in this Combuſtion, and the flames of a Civil War broke forth, the Adverſaries of the Proteſtants, that they might allay the preſent, and prevent the future miſchiefs they feared would follow from theſe irregular proceedings, reſolved to proceed in a more ſeemingly, at leaſt, legal way. The Archbiſhop therefore of *Strigonium*, Lord Lieftenant of *Hungary*, in the year 1673. cited ſome of the Proteſtant Miniſters and Schoolmaſters, that lived under the command of the Emperour, to appear at *Presburg* the 25*th* of *September*: and finding the ſucceſs thereof in the ſurpriſal, and too ſudden compliance of ſeveral that were cited, proceeded in *February* and *March* following, to cite almoſt all the reſt of the Proteſtant Miniſters and School-maſters in the Kingdom, to appear before him in the aforeſaid City of *Presburg*, the 5*th* and 15*th* of the ſame Month of *March*; upon the pretence of their conſpiring with the Rebels, and that they muſt anſwer ſuch things, as were to be laid to their charge. Of thoſe that were ſummoned, ſuch as lived under the *Turks* the *Viſier Baſſa* of *Buda* forbad their appearance, and they obeyed his Commands: but thoſe that were only Tributaries to the *Turks*, and lived under the Government and Laws of the King of *Hungary*, as well as thoſe that were ſolely under his Power and Authority, reſolved to obey the Citation; and therefore accordingly appeared in great numbers. That ſo they might publickly before God and the World declare their innocency, and wipe of ſo foul an aſperſion, as that of Rebellion. And that thereby they might ſhew their loyalty and fidelity to the King of *Hungary*, whoſe Subjects they were (though moſt of them Tributaries alſo to the *Turks*) and their obedience to the Laws of the Kingdom, which ſtrict-

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ly require, that thoſe that are cited ſhould appear. They alſo hoped hereby to preſerve and keep their Churches for Gods Publick Worſhip, which their Adverſaries, upon the pretext of their being guilty of, or at leaſt Complices in the Rebellion, greatly endeavoured either to poſſeſs or demoliſh: and judged however, that their appearance was the likelieſt means, to cut off all occaſions and pretences for ſuch practiſes.

But they appearing, inſtead of being legally proceeded againſt, the aforeſaid Archbiſhop of *Strigonium*, and the Biſhop of *Newſtadt*, together with ſome temporal Lords, required of them,

1. That they ſhould lay down their Eccleſiaſtical Employments, and ingage never to reſume them again.

Or, 2. Depart the Kingdom, never to return again, nor preach or teach therein, upon pain of death and loſs of Eſtates.

Or, 3. Embrace the Popiſh Religion, denying and forſwearing the Proteſtants.

Thoſe that were cited the year before, *viz.* 1673. having been ſurpriſed, and through fear and frailty condeſcended, ſome to relinquiſh their Miniſtry, others to exile, the Papiſts hoped that theſe, or many of them at leaſt, might do the like. But they unanimouſly refuſed, judging ſuch compliance, not only as contrary to Gods will in his Word, and againſt their own Conſciences; but alſo a betraying the Cauſe of God, his Church, and People, together with their eſtabliſht Laws and Liberties.

Their Adverſaries perceiving their conſtancy, and reſolution to adhere to the Proteſtant Religion, and not comply with their demands; the *Fiſcal* or Kings Solicitor put in a Plea againſt them, in form of Proceſs, wherein he charged them, *With calling their King an Idolater; preaching againſt the bleſſed Virgin* Mary; *and to have ſtirred up the People to Rebellion, and to have aſſiſted the Rebels.*

But as he failed in the proof of theſe fictitious Crimes, being not able to produce one Witneſs, of approved integrity, to give teſtimony of theſe things he accuſed them of: ſo the whole Kingdom knew the contrary, and many of the Papiſts themſelves were abundantly ſatisfied concerning their innocency. For they were not only far remote from the Rebels, and never intermedled with State-Controverſies; but alſo were ready on all occaſions to purge themſelves of whatſoever Crimes their Adverſaries could lay to their charge, and clear their innocency by many ſufficient Witneſſes, as they often tendered, but never could be admitted thereto. Can any man of common underſtanding think them ſo ſenſeleſs, as to appear upon Summons, when they might have withdrawn themſelves without danger, either of their Lives or Eſtates, if they had been guilty of ſuch Crimes as were laid to their charge? But their innocency and loyalty were ſufficiently defended by their Advocates, in the Court in *Hungary*, and by the Lord *Bruyninx* Reſident at *Vienna* for the *States General* of the *United Provinces*, in his Memorials to the Emperour King of *Hungary*, which 'tis hoped will ſhortly be made publick, ſo that their further juſtification is here needleſs.

The weakneſs of the *Fiſcals* Plea againſt them being made ſo apparent, their

Judges

Judges then both Prelatical and Secular uſed all the promiſes and threats poſſible, to draw the cited Proteſtants to compliance with their former Propoſitions. Which when they perceived to be all in vain, the 4. of *April* 1674. they pronounced Sentence againſt the Miniſters, *that they ſhould loſe their Lives and Eſtates*, and the 7. of the ſame Month the like againſt the School-maſters. And yet unrequeſted gave them liberty afterwards, in the City and Suburbs, for about 8 weeks; probably that ſome might fly, and thereby give colour for the worlds judging them guilty, and their Adverſaries perſecuting the reſt of the Proteſtants in the Nation; or that ſome at leaſt might in time accept of ſome of the 3 Propoſals tendred them. But ſeeing none would either fly, or ſubſcribe any of their Propoſitions, The Judges then tryed to terrifie them with Souldiers, and grievous Puniſhments, firſt the *Lutherans*, many of whom were ſo far overcome (alas!) that they ſubſcribed to quit their Functions, and the reſt were hurried by the Souldiers into ſeveral Priſons; then the *Calviniſts*, who generally refuſing to comply, were clapt up, firſt in the Priſons at *Presburg*, and afterwards carried by the Souldiers (who ſpoiled ſeveral of them in the way) to five other places, where they were all (about 92 in number) caſt into moſt loathſome and ſtinking Priſons. Their Legs were fettered with Turkiſh Chains continually, and they ſo daily driven to the hardeſt labours, and filthieſt employments, in cleanſing ditches, emptying Jakes, and the like, for the ſpace of almoſt a whole year. Being fed with courſe Bread and Water only, denied all converſe with others, and comforts of Life, their Friends being not permitted to relieve them, nor any to ſhew their charity towards them, the Souldiers following them continually, forcing them to labour beyond their ſtrength, and increaſing their miſeries by their continual cruelties, ceaſing not daily with ſtripes and wounds to add affliction to the afflicted. And as if theſe things had been too little for ſufferings, beſides theſe bodily, and above them all, their Souls were alſo ſorely vexed, at *Leopoldſtat* eſpecially; when they were ſometimes drag'd by the hair, ſometimes driven with Pikes and Muſquets to the Popiſh Maſs and other Worſhip; and when they refuſed to join therein, were ſo beaten and wounded, that their innocent blood there cries to Heaven. And as their Perſecutors thus forced them to the Popiſh, ſo they uſed all means to hinder them from, and diſturb them in their own Worſhip; forbidding them all praying, and ſinging of Pſalms, and when they did, then howling like Dogs continually to diſtract them. In ſhort, ſo grievous and preſſing above meaſure were the miſeries of this impriſonment, that 17 of the *Ausberg Confeſſion* revolted at *Comarini*, and at *Leopoldſtadt* 3, and one of the Reformed Religion, which added no ſmall weight to the afflictions of the reſt, who rather than ſin, waited with patience Gods time for a releaſe from their ſufferings.

Theſe faithful Servants and Confeſſors of Chriſt having endured theſe miſeries, for near a year; the Emperour being to ſend ſome Souldiers into *Italy*, for the aſſiſtance of the King of *Spain*, the 18. of *March* 167$\frac{4}{5}$ there was 41 of them taken out of ſeveral Priſons, and committed to the Souldiers, who were ordered to carry (or, to ſpeak more truly, drive) them chained and fettered, through *Moravia*, *Auſtria*, *Styria*, *Carniola*, *Iſtria*, and *Italy* to *Naples*; they themſelves know-

knowing nothing then, nor in all the way, either whither they went, or for what end. In which journey of 7 weeks together, the many miseries they endured, would be tedious to reckon up, and the greatness of them hard to express. Being daily prest forward, no weakness exempting the slowest from blows, but driven as Beasts over the rough Mountains, and through the Mire and Water in the Vallies, not only in the day time, but often also in the night. Besides their continual hunger (so much Bread only being allowed to ten, as would but suffice one) in this whole journey, no one day passed without great weariness, faintness, and want of rest, their Legs fetter'd, their Backs beaten, their Bodies wounded, their persons reproached, and their feet frequently through the roughness of the way, being bare, leaving the marks of their passing in Blood. So that two died in the way, before the rest came to *Triesta* in *Istria*, where they were robbed of that little they had left, stript of their Cloaths, their Beards cut off, and the next day Souldiers attire was brought them, and they prest to serve the Emperour in the wars; which they refusing to do, were most cruelly beaten, and naked thus and wounded brought aboard a Ship in the Port; wherein after a weeks stay and cruel usage, they were brought over the *Adriatick Sea* with the Souldiers, to *Piscaria* in *Italy*. Whence after 3 days imprisonment, they were carried to *Thiatin*, where 6 unable to travel further, (their Chains having so eaten into their Legs) were left in Prison, whereof 4 quickly after died, and the other two, being recovered, were brought after to *Naples*. From *Thiatin* in the way 3 of the *Lutherans*, unable any longer to endure these miseries, hid themselves and so escaped those sufferings, which remained for the rest to undergo in the way to, and in the City of *Naples*. Where the Captain sold them to the *Vice-Roy* for about 50 Crowns a person, to serve the *Spaniards* as slaves in their Gallies.

Into which after all their hair was cut off, they were put next day, 2 or 3 into a Gallie, chained perpetually, and used no otherwise than the condemned Persons are there, in hard labours, cruel stripes, hunger, thirst, and nakedness in rowing, with many other miseries, whereof 5 of the Brethren and Companions in these tribulations died, and one of them that served in the Gallies in *Sicily* against the *French*, at *Siracuse*; the rest bearing to this day in their bodies the marks of these their sufferings for Christ.

Besides these, there was afterwards in *July* 1675, twenty more Protestant Ministers brought from *Kapuvar* and *Sarvar* in *Hungary*, by other Souldiers (sent from thence to serve the *Spaniards* in *Italy*) the same way, and used much what after the same barbarous manner, as the former were; so that I need not relate the particulars. These 20 being brought to *Triesta*, were there cast into Prison, first in the City, and after in the Castle. The Captain that brought them, for greediness of gain, was twice willing to have released some of them for Money, so that they agreed with him for their ransom; but though the Money was procured at *Venice*, yet would he only release the two that were sent at the several times they agreed the price, both times deceiving the rest; being (as was said) either diswaded, or affrighted by the Jesuites, that had heard thereof, from letting them go free, upon any terms whatsoever. He therefore

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afterwards carried them to *Bucari* in *Dalmatia*, where they were so unmercifully used, or rather abused, that 10 of them revolted, 3 died, and the rest for almost 3 Months saw no light, and sometimes for several days together had not so much as Bread and Water for their sustinance. Here they remained in this miserable condition, until their Brethren at *Naples* obtained their liberty, by the means of *Admiral de Ruyter* of blessed memory, the 11. of *February* 1678.

At which time there were there only 26 left alive, whom after 10 Months slavery in the Gallies there, he released *gratis*, clothed, and fed 6 weeks in his Fleet, till he sent them by an English Ship to *Venice*. Whither afterwards those that were imprisoned at *Bucari*, and released by command from the Emperour, also came; but as half dead men were brought in Sheets, being neither able to go nor stand, so that one of them died the day after their arrival.

And as God was pleased thus mercifully to look upon the sore afflictions and sufferings of these his Servants, which are 30 in number yet living, and release them out of their former miseries; so hath he been graciously pleased to raise them up such Friends, as have not suffered them to want, wheresoever they have come or stayed, since their releasment, though in strange Lands, 16 being in *Helvetia*, 6 in *Germany*, and 8 here in *England*, till it shall please the All-wise Providence to open a Door for their return into their own Country, to preach the Gospel again there.

Which being their principal desire, for the accomplishment thereof, they are imploying themselves, and what Friends they can procure, in petitioning and requesting their Majesties of *Great Britain*, *Sweden*, and *Denmark*, and the Protestant Princes in *Germany*, together with the *States* of the *Low Countries* and *Switzerland*, for their mediation to the *Emperour*, King of *Hungary*, for his restoring them to their former liberty: which they have graciously undertaken, and promist to use their best endeavours for the procuring thereof. For their good success herein, it's hoped, that as all the Members of the Catholick Church ought, so every good Christian will pray to him, who hath the Hearts of Kings in his hand, and turns them as the Rivers of Water, which way he pleaseth, for his own Glory. In which Prayer he desires to join, who hath from certain information faithfully drawn this present *Narrative*. J. H.

FINIS.